

**REMARKS**

Claims 1-12 are pending. By this Amendment, claims 7 and 12 are amended.

Claim 7 was objected to based on an informality. By this Amendment, claims 7 and 12 have been amended to be consistent with the specification. It is respectfully requested that the objection be withdrawn.

Claims 1, 6 and 7 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over Yatake, U.S. Patent No. 5,746,818. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Yatake fails to disclose an image recording method with a pretreatment step of causing a pretreatment liquid containing dipropylene glycol monopropyl ether and a cationic substance to adhere on a medium, as recited in claim 1.

Yatake discloses an image recording method that deposits a reaction solution (pretreatment liquid) and an ink composition onto a recording medium (col. 10, lines 55-60). Although the reaction solution may contain a cationic compound (col. 11, lines 41-65), Yatake fails to disclose using dipropylene glycol monopropyl ether in the reaction solution. Yatake identifies various ethers on col. 12, lines 18-36, but does not identify dipropylene glycol monopropyl ether for the reaction solution. Dipropylene glycol mono-n-butyl is quite different from dipropylene glycol monopropyl ether.

Although the ink composition may use dipropylene glycol mono-n-propyl ether and dipropylene glycol mono-iso-propyl ether (col. 5, lines 22-23), Yatake fails to disclose using these ethers in the reaction solution. Yatake thus fails to disclose using the pretreatment liquid as recited in claim 1. Claim 1 also recites an aqueous pigment ink, and Yatake fails to disclose resin microparticles that have a negative surface charge and react with a cationic substance.

It is respectfully requested that the rejection be withdrawn.

Claims 1 and 6 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) over Nitzan et al. (Nitzan), U.S. Publication 2002/0192381. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Nitzan fails to disclose an image recording method with a pretreatment step of causing a pretreatment liquid containing dipropylene glycol monopropyl ether and a cationic substance to adhere on a medium, as recited in claim 1.

Nitzan discloses using a pretreatment liquid with a coalescence reagent (paragraph [0056]). However, Nitzan fails to identify dipropylene glycol monopropyl ether as a coalescence reagent. Nitzan only discloses using propylene glycol monopropyl ether and dipropylene glycol dimethyl ether in an amount of 0.1 to 15%, which are quite different.

It is respectfully requested that the rejection be withdrawn.

Claim 5 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Yatake in view of Koitabashi et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,582,047 (Koitabashi '047). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Koitabashi '047 fails to overcome the deficiencies of Yatake in disclosing or suggesting the pretreatment liquid, as recited in claim 1. It is respectfully requested that the rejection be withdrawn.

Claims 1, 3, 4, 6 and 7 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Kubota et al. (Kubota), U.S. Patent No. 6,086,197, in view of Yatake. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

As admitted on page 5 of the Office Action, Kubota fails to disclose a pretreatment liquid containing dipropylene glycol monopropyl ether (col. 3, lines 13-20). As discussed above, Yatake also fails to disclose a pretreatment liquid containing dipropylene glycol monopropyl ether. Kubota and Yatake thus fail to disclose or suggest all of the features recited in claim 1. It is respectfully requested that the rejection be withdrawn.

Claim 5 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Kubota in view of Yatake and Koitabashi '047. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Koitabashi '047 fails to overcome the deficiencies of Kubota and Yatake in disclosing or suggesting the pretreatment liquid, as recited in claim 1. It is respectfully requested that the rejection be withdrawn.

Claims 2, 11 and 12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Koitabashi et al., U.S. Publication 2002/0044185 (Koitabashi '185), in view of Yatake. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

As admitted on page 7 of the Office Action, Koitabashi '185 fails to disclose a pretreatment liquid containing dipropylene glycol monopropyl ether. As discussed above, Yatake also fails to disclose a pretreatment liquid containing dipropylene glycol monopropyl ether. Koitabashi '185 and Yatake thus fail to disclose or suggest all of the features recited in claim 2. It is respectfully requested that the rejection be withdrawn.


Claims 8 and 9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Koitabashi '185 in view of Yatake and Kubota, and claim 10 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Koitabashi '185 in view of Yatake and Koitabashi '047. The rejections are respectfully traversed.

Kubota and Koitabashi '047 fail to overcome deficiencies of Koitabashi '185 and Yatake in disclosing or suggesting all of the features recited in claim 2. It is respectfully requested that the rejections be withdrawn.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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JAO:SMS/sxb

Attachment:  
Petition for Extension of Time

Date: May 31, 2006

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